

## Remarks/Arguments

### Response to Objections to the Claims made in paragraph number 1 of the Office Action

Applicants have amended Claims 6, 7, 8, and 11 to provide antecedent basis for the term that lacked antecedent basis or to remove the term lacking antecedent basis.

### Response to Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-5, 7-9, 12, 13 and 15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent no. 4,798,603 to Meyer et al. (hereinafter Meyer). Amended Claims 1 and 12 (and dependent Claims 2-5, 7-9, 13 and 15 ) relate to an absorbent article or a composite system that comprises an absorbent body that defines a length and a width and that includes a region within the length and the width of the absorbent body that contains less absorbent material or no absorbent material and also includes a second material positioned in the region of the absorbent body that contain less absorbent material or no absorbent material. Meyer does not disclose an absorbent article or a composite system that comprises an absorbent body that includes a region within the length and the width of the absorbent body that contains less absorbent material or no absorbent material and that also includes a second material positioned in the region of the absorbent body that contain less absorbent material or no absorbent material. The region that contains less absorbent material or no absorbent material in the article described by Meyer is a liquid permeable transport layer **18** that is located above the absorbent body. The region that contains less absorbent, the liquid transport layer **18**, is not within the length and width of the absorbent body; it is above the absorbent body. Thus, Meyer does not disclose a composite or an absorbent article that includes an absorbent body that defines a length and a width and includes a region within the length and the width of the absorbent body that contains less absorbent material or no absorbent material. Accordingly, Applicant submits that the rejection of Claims 1-5, 7-9, 12, 13 and 15 as anticipated by Meyer is improper and should be withdrawn.

Claims 1 and 6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent no. 5,391,160 to Runneman et al. (hereinafter Runneman). Amended Claim 1 and dependent Claim 6 relate to an absorbent article that comprises an absorbent body that defines a length and a width that includes a region within the length and the width of

the absorbent body that contains less absorbent material or no absorbent material. Runneman does not disclose an absorbent article that comprises an absorbent body that includes a region within the length and the width of the absorbent body that contains less absorbent material or no absorbent material. The region that contains less absorbent material or no absorbent material in the article described by Runneman, the central hose-like body 5, is above the absorbent body and is not within the length and width of the absorbent body. The region that contains less absorbent, the central hose-like body 5, is not within the length and width of the absorbent body. The region containing less absorbent material, the central hose-like body 5, is above the absorbent body. Thus, Runneman does not disclose a composite or an absorbent article that includes an absorbent body that defines a length and a width and includes a region within the length and the width of the absorbent body that contains less absorbent material or no absorbent material. Accordingly, Applicant submits that the rejection of Claims 1 and 6 as anticipated by Runneman is improper and should be withdrawn.

#### Response to Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claim 10 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Runneman as applied above in view of U.S. Patent no. 5,853,401 to Mayer et al. (hereinafter Mayer). Claim 10 which depends on Claim 1 now relates to an absorbent article that comprises an absorbent body that defines a length and a width that includes a region within the length and the width of the absorbent body that contains less absorbent material or no absorbent material. Runneman does not disclose an absorbent article that comprises an absorbent body that includes a region within the length and the width of the absorbent body that contains less absorbent material or no absorbent material as discussed above. Mayer also does not disclose an absorbent article that comprises an absorbent body that includes a region within the length and the width of the absorbent body that contains less absorbent material or no absorbent material. Furthermore, Claim 10 now relates to an absorbent article that comprises a vapor barrier, positioned between a surge management layer and a topsheet, wherein the vapor barrier comprises an opening above the one or more regions of the absorbent body that contain less absorbent material. Mayer does not disclose, teach or suggest a vapor barrier comprising an opening above an absorbent body that includes one or more regions that contain less absorbent material within the length and width of the absorbent

body. Accordingly, Applicant submits that the rejection of Claim 10 as unpatentable over Runneman in view of Mayer is improper and should be withdrawn.

Claim 14 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent no. 4,798,603 to Meyer et al. (hereinafter Meyer). Claim 14 which depends from Claim 12 now relates to a composite system that comprises an absorbent body that defines a length and a width and that includes a region within the length and the width of the absorbent body that contains less absorbent material or no absorbent material and also includes a superabsorbent -free material positioned in the region of the absorbent body that contains less absorbent material or no absorbent material. Meyer does not disclose a composite system that comprises an absorbent body that includes a region within the length and the width of the absorbent body that contains less absorbent material or no absorbent material and also includes a superabsorbent -free material positioned in the region of the absorbent body that contains less absorbent material or no absorbent material. The region that contains less absorbent material or no absorbent material in the composite system described by Meyer is a liquid permeable transport layer **18** that is located above the absorbent body. The liquid permeable transport layer **18** is not within the length and width of the absorbent body; it is above the absorbent body. Thus, Meyer does not disclose a composite or an absorbent article that includes an absorbent body that defines a length and a width and includes a region within the length and the width of the absorbent body that contains less absorbent material or no absorbent material. Accordingly, Applicant submits that the rejection of Claim 14 as unpatentable by Meyer is improper and should be withdrawn.

Claims 11, 16, 17 and 21-24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Meyer as applied above in view of U.S. Patent no. 5,546,056 to Good et al. (hereinafter Good). Amended Claims 1, 12 and 16, from which Claims 11, 17 and 21-24 depend, relate generally to a composite system or to an absorbent article that comprises an absorbent body that defines a length and a width and includes a region within the length and the width of the absorbent body that contains less absorbent material or no absorbent material. Meyer does not disclose a composite system or an absorbent article that comprises an absorbent body that includes a region within the length and the width of the absorbent body that contains less absorbent material or no

absorbent material as discussed above. The region that contains less absorbent material or no absorbent material in the composite system described by Meyer is a liquid permeable transport layer **18** that is located above the absorbent body and is not within the length and width of the absorbent body. Good also does not disclose, teach or suggest a composite system or an absorbent article that comprises an absorbent body that includes a region within the length and the width of the absorbent body that contains less absorbent material or no absorbent material. Accordingly, Applicant submits that the rejection of Claims 11, 16, 17 and 21-24 as unpatentable by Meyer in view of Good is improper and should be withdrawn.

Claims 16, 18 and 19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Runneman as applied above in view of U.S. Patent no. 5,546,056 to Good et al. (hereinafter Good). Amended Claim 16 and Claims 18 and 19 that depend from Claim 16 relate to a disposable absorbent article that comprises a surge layer and an absorbent body that defines a length and a width and includes a region within the length and the width of the absorbent body that contains less absorbent material or no absorbent material. Runneman does not disclose an absorbent article that comprises an absorbent body that includes a region within the length and the width of the absorbent body, illustrated as **4** in Runneman, that contains less absorbent material or no absorbent material as discussed above. Good also does not disclose an absorbent article that comprises an absorbent body that includes a region within the length and the width of the absorbent body that contains less absorbent material or no absorbent material. Accordingly, Applicant submits that the rejection of Claims 16, 18 and 19 over Runneman in view of Good is improper and should be withdrawn.

Claim 20 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Runneman in view of Good as applied above and further in view of U.S. Patent no. 5,853,401 to Mayer et al. (hereinafter Mayer). Claim 20 which depends from amended Claim 16 relates to a disposable absorbent article that comprises a surge management layer and an absorbent body that defines a length and a width and includes a region within the length and the width of the absorbent body that contains less absorbent material or no absorbent material. Neither Runneman nor Good discloses, teaches or suggests an absorbent article that comprises a surge management layer and an

absorbent body that includes a region within the length and the width of the absorbent body that contains less absorbent material or no absorbent material as discussed above. Mayer also does not disclose, teach or suggest an absorbent article that comprises a surge management layer and an absorbent body that includes a region within the length and the width of the absorbent body that contains less absorbent material or no absorbent material. Accordingly, Applicant submits that the rejection of Claim 20 over Runneman in view of Good and further in view of Mayer is improper and should be withdrawn.

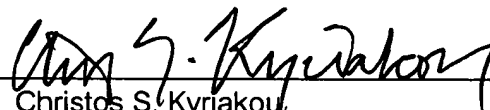
### **Conclusion**

It is respectfully submitted that the claims as presently amended are patentably distinct over the prior art of record. It is believed that the present application is in complete condition for allowance and favorable action, therefore, is respectfully requested. Examiner Stephens is invited and encouraged to telephone the undersigned at (770)-587-8620 should any issues remain after consideration of this response.

Please charge any prosecutorial fees which are due or that are necessary to keep the present patent application pending to Kimberly-Clark Worldwide, Inc. deposit account number 11-0875.

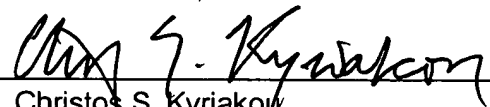
Respectfully submitted,

WULZ ET AL.

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### **CERTIFICATE OF MAILING**

I, Christos S. Kyriakou, hereby certify that on February 10, 2004 this document is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first-class mail, postage prepaid, in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

By:   
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